

## **Social Studies Grades 4 through 8- South Carolina Palmetto Assessment of State Standards**

### **Analysis of 2015 Test Result Data**

#### **Areas of Strength (Continued Focus)**

- Students were able to utilize quotes well (grade 4)
- Excellent knowledge of Reconstruction (grade 5)
- Mastery in content areas of ancient Greece and Rome (grade 6)
- Students could locate colonial claims on maps (grade 7)
- Students had an excellent understanding of Eastern Woodlands culture (grade 8)

#### **Areas Needing Additional Attention**

- Teach the diversity of Native American groups as well as the greatest source of conflict between European cultures (grade 4)
- Focus on difficult concepts such as those found in the foundational documents (Declaration of Independence, Articles of Confederation and the Constitution) as well as foundations for representative government and the applications of the branches of government (grades 4 and 8)
- Consider how topics of westward expansion and progressive reforms are handled. Do students evaluate cause and effect, seek trends, trace across time? (grades 4, 5 and 8)
- Utilize maps especially with worldwide (and thus exponential) concepts like those areas that are multiple exemplars of America's becoming a world power as well as during the Cold War and post-Cold War periods (grades 5 and 7)
- Correct misconceptions possibly attributable to greater emphasis on other aspects of the topic. Examples include: the *effects* of the Dust Bowl or the *prejudice* experienced by groups in addition to African Americans. (grade 5)
- Students need to work on world religions in the context of their founding and level of popularity/impact through historical time periods applicable (grade 6)
- World history Courses should take care to insure that the course is not, in fact, a Western Civilization course. Greater emphasis on African history and religion may need to occur in some classrooms. (grade 6)
- Students exhibited some difficulty with concepts relating to Renaissance art and Henry VIII's "reformation" of the Church. (grade 6)
- Often many of the most difficult concepts involve the most recent worldwide history. Students associated NATO with the Common Market and were confused by the breakup of the Soviet Union as well as the issues/crises in the Middle East. (grade 7)
- Essential understandings needing attention: What did the cotton gin do and what were its effects? How is the growth of sectionalism tied to western territories and the role (stance) of the federal government? (grade 8)

- Students also exhibited some difficulty with the topics of John C Calhoun, Reconstruction, the Charleston earthquake and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)'s role. (grade 8)
- General overall observations:
  - Read carefully. Read all options and all captions and titles on graphics. Practice paraphrasing what the questions is asking (including employing context clues and the time period (era) specified in the question) and using vocabulary words often associated with key concepts or their assessment such as: conflict, port, tenement, subsidies and mercantilism (as appropriate).
  - Practice utilizing graphic organizers to organize analysis and to assess.
  - Require regular analysis utilizing concepts of cause and effect in both directions.
  - Pay attention to pacing, especially in terms of chronologically last and often more complicated and global concepts at all grade levels.
  - Utilize maps whenever possible. Employment of comparative (over time) maps is essential.
  - Usage of the verb "to compare" does not necessarily require a comparison item. However, practice working on comparatives and superlatives is also essential.
  - Standards written at the "understanding" level require regular practice in evaluating issues rather than simply "going over" them.
  - Economic concepts are often difficult and therefore require careful attention/emphasis. Economic motives of actions (like land grabs/claims) should be thoroughly analyzed.